

Testimony of Angelique Lewis
Appropriations Committee
February 23, 2017

Good evening Connecticut Legislators and Senators and to whom else this may concern:

My name is Angelique Lewis. I live in Torrington, CT, and have lived here for 17 years. I have never been evicted or have had a non-payment rent even though I struggle daily on a very limited income to make sure rent is paid. I am now in a compromised position. I am here to let you know that we have a housing crisis in CT and I am a part of it! Right now, as we speak I am living under a rental assistance program voucher. Sometimes the landlord will take any low income tenants who have vouchers because they know this is guaranteed money. But due to the fact, they know that their apartments are inspected only once a year, some landlords do very little as possible in terms of upkeep of their properties. I am physically and mentally disabled and I have a very limited income. Where I am living is NOT handicapped assessable and because of my age and income I am on long waiting lists in order to get something that is handicapped accessible. In the meantime, I have constant stress and fear on top of everything else and have had to endure a variety of issues in my housing situation from roaches, harassment, discrimination, unsafe conditions etc.

This is where CLRP comes in, they are like the shepards' who are assisting the sheep as far as legal issues and housing support. Without agencies such as CLRP, you're under the landlords thumb. Because they know that most of their tenants do not know their legal rights, without the assistance of CLRP the tenants are caught in a spin because of lack of knowledge. So, you have to be under federal income guidelines to have a voucher anyway and the landlords know how to be compensated as far as monies. So why take away an agency like CLRP where the tenants can be compensated as far as legal issues and anything else that is like a protection umbrella of knowledge? Without the protection of an agency like CLRP, it feels very much like a class system..... THE HAVES & THE HAVE NOTS!